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## THE CENSUS OF PORTO RICO.

BY

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The War Department has made public, in three bulletins, the leading results of the enumeration taken in Porto Rico under its direction last autumn.

The census was taken as of date October 16, and occupied about six weeks in field work. The plan and administration were very similar to those of the United States census, the island being divided into seven supervisor's districts, corresponding to the seven governmental departments, and each of these into numerous enumeration districts, with an average population of about 1,000. The supervision and enumeration were done entirely by Porto Ricans, the only Americans employed in the work being General Sanger, the Director, Mr. Harrison Dingman, the Assistant Director, and four clerks.

The population schedules were very similar to those used in the United States census, and the information obtained was in character almost identical. The scope of the census was much more limited than that of the United States, since the subjects of mortality, the defective, dependent and delinquent classes, were not touched upon, and the industries of the island, with the exception of a small schedule relating to agriculture, were untouched.

The results of this census are of especial interest to us as being the first authentic and trustworthy statement of the condition of this people, recently added to our numbers.

The total number of inhabitants of Porto Rico was 953,243. The latest official Spanish census was taken in 1887, and showed at that time a population of 798,565, indicating a decennial rate of increase of 16.2 per cent., a rate about the same as that of Ohio during the decade between 1880 and 1890. The population by department in 1899 was as follows:

Guayama.....	111,986
Humacao.....	88,501
Ponce.....	203,191
Arecibo.....	162,308
Bayamon ..	160,046
Mayaguez.....	127,566
Aguadilla.....	99,645

Porto Rico, with an area of 3,600 square miles and a population of nearly a million, is, on the average, very densely settled, there being about as many inhabitants to a square mile as in the State of Massachusetts; there is, however, this difference, that while in the State of Massachusetts the greater part of the population is collected in cities, and a large part of it in a few great cities, in Porto Rico the urban element is small, and the population is distributed quite uniformly over the island. There are but four cities whose population exceeds 8,000—San Juan with 32,048, Ponce with 27,952, Mayaguez with 15,187, and Arecibo with 8,008 inhabitants. Thus, the total urban population, under the above definition, numbered only 83,195, or 8.7 per cent. of the population of the island; while the corresponding element of the population of the United States constituted 29.2 per cent. ten years ago, and probably the proportion is to-day much larger. In Cuba the corresponding proportion was even greater, being 32.3 per cent.

Considering as cities all bodies of urban population down to 1,000 inhabitants each, it appears that there are in the island 57 cities, with a total population of 203,792, or 21.4 per cent. of the total population of the island. The corresponding proportion in Cuba was 47.1 per cent., or more than twice as great. Hence, it appears that the people of Porto Rico are essentially rural.

As to sex, Porto Rico contained few more females than males. The disproportion, however, is not sufficiently large to be in any way significant.

The proportion of children under ten years of age was 31 per cent. of the total population, being much larger than in the United States, where it was 24 per cent. The ratio of children was higher in this island than in any State in the Union or in any country of western Europe. The proportion of children of school age, five to seventeen years, was also high, being 33.8 per cent., while it was 29.6 per cent. in the United States; but it is at advanced ages that the most marked differences appear. Persons over forty-five years of age in Porto Rico constituted only 11.8 per cent. of the population, while in the United States they constituted 17.2 per cent., or nearly half as much more—a fact that suggests for the island a large death rate and short life period.

Distributed by race, Porto Rico contained 59,390 negroes, 304,352 persons of mixed white and negro blood, and 75 Chinese, making a total colored population of 363,817, or 38.2 per cent. of the population—a proportion about the same as in the State of Virginia, and somewhat higher than that of Cuba. The proportion of col-

ored ranged in different departments from 14.4 per cent. in Aguedilla to 53.9 per cent. in Humacao. In the latter and Bayamon more than half the inhabitants were colored. The proportion of colored was greater in the eastern part of the island than elsewhere.

Comparison with figures of earlier censuses shows that the colored element, although increasing numerically, has decreased in proportion to the whites, as is the case in the United States and in Cuba.

The proportion of the foreign-born in Porto Rico was trifling, being only 1.5 per cent., and more than half of this element were natives of Spain. Since most of these people of foreign birth were found in the two cities of Ponce and San Juan, the population of the remainder of the island is almost pure Porto Rican.

The conjugal condition of the people of the island is peculiar. Of the total population 69.7 per cent. were single—an exceedingly high ratio, more than 10 per cent. higher than that of the United States. Only 16.6 per cent. of the population were married, and 8.9 per cent. were living together as husband and wife by mutual consent—a condition produced by the great expense of the marriage ceremony. Thus, the total number of unions, either under the law or outside of it, constituted but 25.5 per cent. of the population, as compared with 35.7 per cent. in the United States of persons legally married.

The statistics concerning school attendance show that only 8.1 per cent. of the children of school age were reported as attending school—a fact which is directly correlated with the high percentage of illiterates. Of the persons ten years of age and over 77.3 per cent. were unable to read. This proportion is much higher than in Cuba, where only 56.8 per cent. were illiterate.

The third bulletin relates to citizenship. It discusses the males of voting age, classified by birthplace, race and literacy. Of this class of the population only 3.8 per cent. were of foreign birth, of which 2.8 per cent. were born in Spain. Of the natives 25 per cent. only were able to read. Classifying them by race, the literate whites constituted 29.4 per cent. of all whites, and of the colored the literates constituted only 17.2 per cent. Under an educational qualification, therefore, the suffrage of the island is restricted to 47,973 persons, or about one-fourth of all the males of voting age.